



Skills Funding  
Agency

# Maximum loan amounts for advanced learner loans designated qualifications 2017 to 2018

This document sets out the methodology for establishing maximum amounts for advanced learner loans designated qualifications. It also confirms the maximum amounts for the funding year 2017 to 2018.

March 2017

Of interest to providers and employers delivering provision funded by learners through advanced learner loans

## **Introduction**

1. The Secretary of State for the Department for Education, acting through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), designates the qualifications eligible for funding with Advanced Learner Loans (Loans). A designated qualification is one that has been through the SFA's nomination process and meets the criteria detailed in [2017 to 2018 Designating Qualifications](#).
2. This document describes the methodology for establishing maximum loan amounts for designated qualifications.
3. This document confirms what the maximum loan amounts are for all designated qualifications, where learners start these qualifications between 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 (inclusive). These maximum loan amounts will apply for the full duration of a designated qualification, including if it extends into the 2018 to 2019 funding year or beyond.
4. The maximum loan amounts set out in this document will not change throughout the funding year.

## **Establishing the maximum loan amount**

5. There is a single set of maximum loan amounts for all designated qualifications, no matter how you deliver these qualifications.
6. We use a 'matrix' (table) to set maximum loan amounts. The matrix contains two criteria to decide the appropriate amount for each qualification:
  - The type of qualification (see paragraph 7) or the size of the qualification in Guided Learning Hours (GLH)
  - The programme weighting for the qualification
7. Note the following exceptions, where we set the maximum loan amounts as a matter of policy:
  - GCE AS-levels
  - GCE A-levels
  - Access to HE Diplomas
  - 5 specialist Dance and Drama Diplomas

## Size and type of the qualification

8. We use Ofqual's [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) to define the size of the qualifications by their GLH, or if this is not available the minimum GLH. Where GLH is not supplied by the awarding organisation, we will assess the use of Total Qualification Time (TQT).
9. We maintained the same maximum loan amounts for qualifications that were also designated for loans in 2016 to 2017. These were the same maximum loan amounts for qualifications that were also designated for loans in 2015 to 2016, when we also used either the qualification's GLH or credit value to define the size of the qualification. For more information for how maximum loan amounts were previously set, please refer to [Funding rates for 24 advanced learning loans designated qualifications 2015 to 2016](#) and [Maximum loan amounts for advanced learner loans designated qualifications 2016 to 2017](#).
10. The minimum loan amount is £300.

## Programme weightings

11. Programme weightings recognise the relative costs of providing training in different sectors and subjects and are included within maximum loan amounts.
12. To set programme weightings, we refer to the Sector Subject Area (SSA) detailed in the annex to this document. We have also set a limited number of exceptions. The awarding organisation decides the SSA for all qualifications as part of the regulation process. For further information, please refer to Ofqual's **Register of Regulated Qualifications** and the [Quality Assurance Agency](#) website.

## The matrix

13. The 'matrix' in Tables 1 and 2 show the maximum loan amounts for designated qualifications in 2017 to 2018. The 'Qualification size' column is for those qualifications for which we set a maximum loan amount in the funding year 2015 to 2016. It is for information only: we do not use it for setting maximum loan amounts for new qualifications in the funding year 2017 to 2018.

**Table 1: Maximum loan amounts based on GLH/TQT**

GLH/TQT size	Qualification size (in credits only for 2015 to 2016)*	Maximum loan amount according to programme weighting				
		A - Base	B - Low	C - Medium	D - High	E - Specialist
45 to 68	6 to 8	£300	£336	£390	£480	£516
69 to 92	9 to 11	£450	£504	£585	£720	£774
93 to 100	12	£600	£672	£780	£960	£1,032
101 to 196	13 to 24	£724	£811	£941	£1,159	£1,246
197 to 292	25 to 36	£1,265	£1,417	£1,645	£2,025	£2,176
293 to 388	37 to 48	£1,987	£2,225	£2,583	£3,179	£3,417
389 to 580	49 to 72	£2,573	£2,882	£3,345	£4,117	£4,425
581 to 1060	73 to 132	£4,170	£4,670	£5,421	£6,671	£7,172
1061 or more	133 or more	£6,602	£7,395	£8,583	£10,564	£11,356

\*Some qualifications in 2015 to 2016 that are also available in 2017 to 2018 had their maximum loan amount based upon their credit value, see paragraph 9

**Table 2: Maximum loan amounts based on the type of qualification**

Type of qualification	Maximum loan amount according to programme weighting				
	A - Base	B - Low	C - Medium	D - High	E - Specialist
GCE AS-level	£724	£811	£941	£1,159	-
GCE A-level	£1,987	£2,225	£2,583	£3,179	-
Access to Higher Education Diploma	£3,022	£3,384	£3,928	£4,835	£5,197

14. The rows represent the size of the qualification in GLH or TQT, or the type of qualification (AS-level, A-level or Access to HE Diplomas). The first three bands in the table, for qualifications under 150 GLH, are only for qualifications being designated at Level 4 or above. The other GLH bandings are the same as in the funding years 2015 to 2016 and 2016 to 2017.

15. The columns represent programme weighting category, associated with the SSAs and described in the annex to this document.

16. Five Dance and Drama Diplomas (2 at Level 5 and 3 at Level 6) have bespoke maximum loan amounts, which are set out in Table 3.

**Table 3: Maximum loan amounts for specialist Dance and Drama Diplomas**

<b>Learning aim reference</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Maximum loan amount</b>
60009457	Diploma in Professional Acting	£7,395
60009470	Diploma in Professional Dance	£14,790
60009482	Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre	£22,185
60009731	Diploma in Professional Dance	£22,185
60009743	Diploma in Professional Acting	£22,185

## Annex: Sector subject areas by programme weighting categories

Sector subject area code and description	Programme weighting
1 Health, public services and care	B – Low
1.1 Medicine and dentistry	B – Low
1.2 Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine	B – Low
1.3 Health and social care	B – Low
1.4 Public services	A – Base
1.5 Child development and well being	B – Low
2 Science and mathematics	A – Base
2.1 Science	B – Low
2.2 Mathematics and statistics	A – Base
3 Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	B – Low
3.1 Agriculture	E – Specialist
3.2 Horticulture and forestry	E – Specialist
3.3 Animal care and veterinary science	E – Specialist
3.4 Environmental conservation	B – Low
4 Engineering and manufacturing technologies	C – Medium
4.1 Engineering	C – Medium
4.2 Manufacturing technologies	C – Medium
4.3 Transportation operations and maintenance	C – Medium
5 Construction, planning and the built environment	C – Medium
5.1 Architecture	C – Medium
5.2 Building and construction	C – Medium
5.3 Urban, rural and regional planning	C – Medium
6 Information and communication technology	A – Base
6.1 ICT practitioners	C – Medium
6.2 ICT for users	B – Low
7 Retail and commercial enterprise	A – Base
7.1 Retailing and wholesaling	A – Base
7.2 Warehousing and distribution	A – Base
7.3 Service enterprises	B – Low
7.4 Hospitality and catering	C – Medium
8 Leisure, travel and tourism	A – Base
8.1 Sport, leisure and recreation	B – Low
8.2 Travel and tourism	A – Base
9 Arts, media and publishing	A – Base
9.1 Performing arts	B – Low
9.2 Crafts, creative arts and design	C – Medium
9.3 Media and communication	B – Low
9.4 Publishing and information services	A – Base

Sector subject area	Programme weighting
10 History, philosophy and theology	A – Base
10.1 History	A – Base
10.2 Archaeology and archaeological sciences	B – Low
10.3 Philosophy	A – Base
10.4 Theology and religious studies	A – Base
11 Social sciences	A – Base
11.1 Geography	B – Low
11.2 Sociology and social policy	A – Base
11.3 Politics	A – Base
11.4 Economics	A – Base
11.5 Anthropology	A – Base
12 Languages, literature and culture	A – Base
12.1 Languages, literature and culture of the British Isles	A – Base
12.2 Other languages, literature and culture	A – Base
12.3 Linguistics	A – Base
13 Education and training	B – Low
13.1 Teaching and lecturing	B – Low
13.2 Direct learning support	B – Low
14 Preparation for life and work	A – Base
14.1 Foundations for learning and life	A – Base
14.2 Preparation for work	A – Base
15 Business, administration and law	A – Base
15.1 Accounting and finance	A – Base
15.2 Administration	A – Base
15.3 Business management	A – Base
15.4 Marketing and sales	A – Base
15.5 Law and legal services	A – Base

### Note

The following is a list of exceptions to the sector subject areas and programme weightings shown above:

1. Waste management and recycling in SSA 1.4 weighted at B – Low.
2. Hair and beauty in SSA 7.3 weighted at C – Medium.
3. Music technology in SSA 9.1 weighted at D – High.
4. Music practitioners in SSA 9.1 weighted at E – Specialist.

## Annex B: Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Designated Qualification	A qualification that the SFA's nomination process has designated as in-scope for Loans.
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	The number of hours, including assessment time, that a student spends being taught or instructed by, or otherwise participating in, education or training under the guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor or tutor. This is detailed in Ofqual's <u>General Conditions of Recognition</u> (June 2016).
Ofqual	The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation.
Learning Aim Reference	The unique number allocated for all learning aims by the Skills Funding Agency set out in the first column in table 3, corresponding to the qualification in the second column.
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	The independent body entrusted with monitoring, and advising on, standards and quality in UK higher education. The QAA is responsible for the recognition scheme, which is the regulatory framework through which Access to HE courses are regulated and recognised.
Programme Weighting	The letter from A to E and descriptor set out in the second column of the table in the annex, which corresponds to the sector subject area in the first column of that table, subject to the exceptions set out after the table.
Regulated qualifications	Qualifications that an Ofqual-regulated awarding organisation offer are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).
Specialist Dance and Drama Diploma	The qualifications set out in the second column of table 3.
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	TQT is comprised of guided learning hours and an estimate of the number of hours a student spends in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by, but not under the guidance or supervision of, a lecturer, supervisor or tutor. This is detailed in Ofqual's <u>General Conditions of Recognition</u> (June 2016).



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